*This is an internal document generated by Hilary Hanahoe, RDA Secretary General (Feb 2020), as a proposal to Council to consider the creation of Communities of Practice within the RDA framework. It comes as a result pf a discussion with IGAD (Interest Group on Agricultural Data) as well as the request from European Commission to support the engagement of underrepresented scientific disciplines and domains both in RDA and EOSC (European Open Science Cloud).*

## RDA Communities of Practice

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Function** | Communities of Practice (CoPs) form to represent discipline or domain specific communities under RDA as well as to investigate, discuss and provide knowledge and skills on any specific discipline and/or domain issues relevant to the community and RDA. Communities of Practice are comprised of experts from the community that are committed to directly or indirectly enabling data sharing, exchange, or interoperability. Communities of Practice serve as a platform for communication and coordination among individuals, outside and within RDA, with shared interests. Communities of Practice cannot produce Recommendations but can produce other kinds of outputs. They produce deliverables such as surveys, recommendations, reports, and Working Group Case Statements. An Interest Group can progress to Communities of Practice status based on the following criteria:* Representation of the main discipline / domain stakeholders (recognised institutions, associations, etc.)
* Critical mass of group membership (100+)
* International membership (at least 10 countries)
* Letters of support evidencing the value of CoP
* At least 1 working group created and recommendation endorsed
 |
| **Membership** | Communities of Practice are open to participation from all RDA members. Members should be international experts, and ideally the group should span at least 3 continents. |
| **Creation** | A Communities of Practice is established once the CoP Agreement has been endorsed by Council. Each Community of practice has two or more Chairs who serve as the point of contact for the CoP. |
| **Duration** | There is no fixed duration for a Community of Practice. Each CoP will be subject to review on an 18 month basis. |
| **Termination** | Communities of Practice are disbanded on request or when, in the opinion of Council and after seeking advice from TAB, they are deemed to be inactive.  |
| **Rights** | * Communities of Practice have access to appropriate administrative and communications support from the RDA Secretariat.
* Communities of Practice efforts are supported by technical expertise and guidance from the Technical Advisory Board and Organisational Assembly.
 |
| **Responsibilities** | * Communities of Practice are responsible for coordinating, progressing and updating the activities described in their Agreement.
* Communities of Practice are expected to participate in Plenaries on a regular basis.
* Communities of Practice are encouraged to conduct open discussions on the RDA online platform during the course of their work.
* Communities of Practice are responsible for upholding the RDA Guiding Principles, including achievement of progress via consensus.
 |

**Comparison of Communities of Practice in the context of other RDA groups**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | **Birds of a Feather** | **Interest Group** | **Community of Practice** | **Working Group** |
| *Endorsed by Council* | **No** | **Yes** | **Yes** | **Yes** |
| *Charter / Case Statement / Agreement Open for Comment* | **No** | **Yes** | **Yes** | **Yes** |
| *Ambassadors* | **No** | **No** | **Yes** | **No** |
| *Co-Chairs* | **No** | **Yes** | **Yes** | **Yes** |
| *Mandatory Plenary Meeting Presence* | **Yes** | **Yes** | **No** | **Yes** |
| *Recommendations* | **No** | **No** | **Yes (at least 1 from an initial WG)** | **Yes** |
| *Outputs* | **No** | **Yes** | **Yes** | **Yes** |
| *Discipline / Domain Specific Mandatory* | **No** | **No** | **Yes** | **No** |
| *Limited Duration* | **Yes** | **No** | **No but review every 18 months** | **Yes** |
| *International Membership* | **Yes (at least 3 countries)** | **Yes (at least 3 countries)** | **Yes (at least 10 countries)** | **Yes (at least 3 countries)** |
| *Critical Mass (at least 100+ members)* | **No** | **No** | **Yes** | **No** |
| *Letters of Support* | **No** | **No** | **Yes** | **No** |

CoP Agreement Template

Should include recognised CoP elements such as:

* **Mutual Engagement**: Firstly, through participation in the community, members establish norms and build collaborative relationships; this is termed mutual engagement. These relationships are the ties that bind the members of the community together as a social entity.
* **Joint Enterprise**: Secondly, through their interactions, they create a shared understanding of what binds them together; this is termed the joint enterprise. The joint enterprise is (re)negotiated by its members and is sometimes referred to as the 'domain' of the community.
* **Shared Repertoire**: Finally, as part of its practice, the community produces a set of communal resources, which is termed their shared repertoire; this is used in the pursuit of their joint enterprise and can include both literal and symbolic meanings.